

CITY OF SAVANNAH ANTI-POVERTY TASK FORCE

Summary of Meeting

March 25, 2003, 10 – 11:30 a.m.
City of Savannah Council Chambers

1. Welcome/Meeting Purpose

Despite community-wide poverty initiatives, poverty overall in Savannah has decreased very little in the past decade. Because of this, the Advisory Committee for the City's 2003-2007 Housing and Community Development (HCD) Plan advised the City to take the lead in addressing poverty. The development of the Anti-Poverty Task Force (APTF) is in response to this request.

The City Manager outlined the purpose of the APTF and the meeting. Mr. Brown suggested that the APTF:

- look for a feasible and practical approach in eliminating poverty
- find gaps in service provision
- look for initiatives that bring the greatest good to the greatest number of people
- develop action steps for the next 12 months

2. Overview of Government and Community Initiatives

The City and other organizations and agencies address poverty through many programs such as:

- The Housing and Community Development (HCD) Plan
- Individual Development Account (IDA) program
- Earned Income Tax Credits (EITC) Program
- Project SAV/Making Connections
- Project Workforce

3. Identification of Key Issues/Priorities:

- A. Lack of a network for families and individuals to support systems -- open avenues and hook families to support systems
- B. Development of a clear picture of the issues and the organizations and programs addressing those issues.
- C. Identification of key issues contributing to the persistence of poverty
 - School performance/education
 - Literacy
 - Family/ individual finances
 - Affordable housing
 - Access to the job market
 - Transportation
 - Displacement
 - Teenage pregnancy
 - Child care
 - Nutrition and healthcare
 - Domestic violence
 - Emotional and mental health
 - Substance abuse
 - Criminality
 - Institutional barriers
 - Access to capital

D. Group suggestions:

- In order to identify the APTF's mission and scope, members requested a Profile of Poverty in Savannah consisting of data to better understand the key problems.
- Members also requested information about best practices for poverty reduction from other cities.
- The City Manager suggested selecting 25 families and examining their barriers to self-sufficiency.

4. Next Steps

- A. The City will develop a grid of the organizations and agencies addressing poverty and the key issues associated with the continuation of poverty. The grid will be used to find:
- gaps in service provision
 - areas of potential collaboration
 - potential areas of redundancy
- B. The City will also develop a Profile of Poverty in Savannah and research best practices for poverty reduction.
- C. At the next meeting:
- review of identified key issues – additions/deletions?
 - review of identified organizations/agencies and their poverty reduction initiatives – additions?
 - complete the grid and discuss the three items above
 - review and discuss the Profile of Poverty in Savannah
 - review and discuss best practices for poverty reduction
 - discuss the APTF's scope of work and organizational structure

5. Next Meeting

Wednesday, April 30

10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Bull Street Library Auditorium